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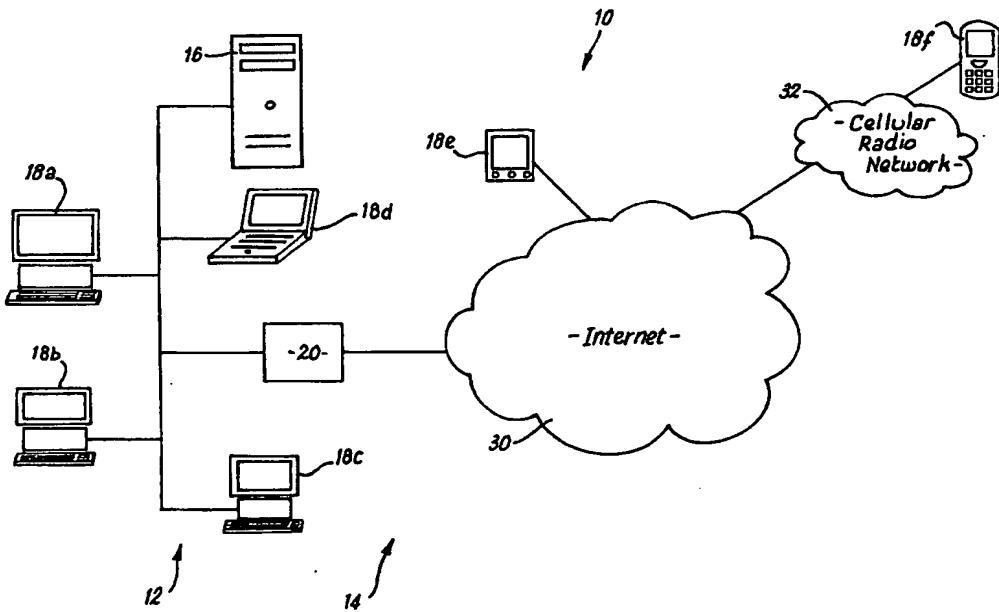
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(54) Title: SECURED VIRTUAL PRIVATE NETWORK WITH MOBILE NODES



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(57) Abstract: A security gateway connects an external portion of a virtual private network to an internal secured portion of the network. The gateway is arranged to identify automatically when a communication session exists between two mobile workstations both of which are connected in the external portion of the network. The mobile workstations are then enabled to communicate with each other without using the gateway as an intermediary. This communication can be secured. The route by which packets are transferred between the workstations may then be optimised.